

Minutes of the Planning Commission **Special Meeting of Monday, October 2, 2017** Council Chambers, One Twin Pines Lane, Belmont, CA

ROLL CALL 7:00 P.M.

Planning Commission members Present: Hendrix, Goldfarb, Simpson, Meola, Mates
Planning Commission members Absent: Majeski

Staff Present: Community Development Director deMelo, City Attorney Rennie, Principal Planner DiDonato, Assistant Planner Dietz, Temporary Administrative Assistant Hernandez

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Chair Mates

COMMUNITY FORUM ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

No one came forward to speak.

COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS / AGENDA AMENDMENTS

City Council Meeting of October 10, 2017 - Commission Liaison Majeski, Alternate Mates.

Chair Mates attended the BRSSD school for Save the Music event. She indicated it was great, well attended, a great community event, and it was nice to be out and see everyone.

CONSENT CALENDAR

NONE

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

NONE

PUBLIC HEARINGS

608 HILLER STREET – TO CONSIDER A SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN REVIEW TO CONSTRUCT A 1,009 SQUARE FOOT ADDITION TO AN EXISTING 2,364 SQUARE FOOT SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE (THIS ITEM WAS CONTINUED FROM THE FEBRUARY 21, 2017 MEETING). (APPL. NO PA2014-0021) APN: 040-281-330.

Chair Mates polled the Commission for ex-parte communication regarding the project; Commissioners indicated that site visits were made but no ex-parte communications were made.

The project was submitted in 2014 under the old Single-Family Design Review code. At the February 21, 2017 meeting, the Planning Commission reviewed a Single-Family Design Review application, however the Commission continued the project to allow the applicant additional time to address concerns related to project bulk, and other design related matters.

All four factors (building bulk, grading, hardscape, and tree removal) appeared to be appropriately addressed in the building design to achieve a complementary balance for the project.

Principal Planner DiDonato presented the staff report and stated that the proposed project findings can be made in the affirmative, and recommended approval of the project.

Chair Mates opened the Public Hearing, no one came forward to speak.

Chair Mates closed the Public Hearing.

Commission deliberation on the item yielded support for the project.

ACTION: On a Motion Made by Commissioner Simpson, Seconded by Commissioner Meola Approving a Single-Family Design Review At 608 Hiller Street (Appl. No. 2014-0021).

Passed 5/2 (McCune, absent, Majeski, absent) Resolution 2017-37

Chair Mates stated that the Action is appealable within 10 calendar days.

2474 HALLMARK DRIVE – TO CONSIDER AN ADMINISTRATIVE AMENDMENT TO THE DETAILED DEVELOPMENT PLAN TO CONSTRUCT A 200-SQUARE FOOT ADDITION TO AN EXISTING 3,089 SQUARE FOOT SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE. (APPL. No. PA2017-0034) APN: 045-512-090

Chair Mates polled the Commission for ex-parte communication regarding the project; several Commissioners indicated that site visits were made but no ex-parte communications were made.

Assistant Planner Dietz presented the Staff Report. The applicant requests a Conditional Use Permit and Single-Family Design Review to allow a 200-square foot addition to the existing residence.

Colors and materials would match the existing home and no trees would be removed and no additional landscaping would be done.

Two neighbors had concerns regarding the potential increase in the height of the home; the neighbors met with the applicant, reviewed the plans, and were satisfied that there is no proposed increase to the height of the home. No additional concerns were received.

Staff believed that the project is well designed and articulated, minimizes bulk, and does not impact public views; the project does not require grading, and the project is in compliance with the Residential Design Guidelines; staff believed that findings can be made in the affirmative and recommended approval of the project.

There was discussion on why this project required Commission approval; Assistant Planner Dietz stated that any upper floor alterations to homes in the Planned Development district require Planning Commission approval.

Commissioner Mates opened the Public Hearing, no one came forward to speak.
Commissioner Mates closed the Public Hearing.

Commission deliberation concluded that the project is well articulated, and findings can be made.

ACTION: On a Motion by Commissioner Meola and Seconded by Commissioner Goldfarb Approving a Conditional Use Permit and Single-Family Design Review in conjunction with amendment of an Approved Detailed Development Plan for 2474 Hallmark Drive (Appl. No. 2017-0034).

Passed 5/2 (McCune, absent, Majeski, absent) Resolution 2017-38

Chair Mates stated that the Action is appealable within 10 calendar days.

2035 GENERAL PLAN (GP) UPDATE, PHASE 1/INTERIM ZONING, CLIMATE ACTION PLAN, AND FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (FEIR)

Sophie Martin from Dyett and Bhatia presented an overview of the planning process and community outreach for the 2035 General Plan Update, Phase 1/Interim Zoning, Climate Action Plan, and Final Environmental Impact Report.

The current General Plan that the City of Belmont currently has dates back to 1982 The General Plan served the city well, but it was time to take a fresh look, and make sure that the document met all the state requirements for what a General Plan must do, but really to reflect the vision of the Belmont community and the goals and aspirations that the community has for the next 20 years.

What was prepared for the City of Belmont is a Programmatic EIR (Environmental Impact Report), which is “A general environmental assessment for an overall program of projects intended to be developed over a long-term planning horizon.” The potential areas of Environmental Impact cover areas ranging from aesthetics, air quality, utilities, transportation, etc.

The Draft EIR was released on June 30, 2017, and it circulated for the public to comment for 50 days. All the comments that were received were looked at, categorized and responded to. The responses to the comments and any corrections were put together and that document combined with the Draft EIR constitutes the Final EIR.

The General Plan is required by state law; all cities and counties in California must have one, and it must cover certain topics; beyond that cities have a lot of discretion of how often they update their General Plan and if there are additional topics they want to cover. Belmont’s General Plan meets state requirements as well, and it covers items that are important to the City of Belmont.

The City Council will take up their action on the Final EIR, 2035 General Plan, Phase 1 Zoning and Climate Action Plan on October 24, 2017. The Planning Commission will be considering the Belmont Village Specific Plan (BVSP) and the Belmont Village Zoning (BVZ) at their October 17, 2017 meeting; then the City Council will consider the Belmont Village Specific Plan and the Belmont Village Zoning at their November 14, 2017 meeting.

Commission discussion ensued regarding the Climate Action Plan. Community Development Director deMelo stated that a goal is GHG emission reduction by certain target years. There are targets that the state sets, and the cities need to adopt plans to meet those emission reduction targets. There are 22 measures that the City has in the Climate Action Plan. If these measures get fully implemented, the City anticipates achieving these targets, but it requires participation not only from the city but from the community.

Chair Mates opened the Public Hearing.

Basil Hosmer, Belmont resident, was concerned with the fire danger area north of Ralston, up in the hills where it is densely packed with housing.

Sarah Feldman, Belmont resident, had concerns with the 2035 General Plan Update. The Bay Area has a job/housing imbalance. There is demand for indoor all-season recreation, and she indicated that we can't balance the job/housing imbalance by removing recreation and replacing it with housing. The reduction of recreation in Belmont creates a negative effect by adding additional travel time for Belmont residents' recreational needs; this increases pollutants which have an environmental impact.

Shane Arters, Belmont resident, supports the 2035 General Plan Update; he had a chance to review it in the past year and stated that it provides a great direction and roadmap for growth in Belmont. It enhances Belmont's culture, economic and physical identity, and aims to create a vibrant mixed use and downtown center. The plans show commitment to the Parks and Recreation Open Space by allowing a density bonus. He would like to learn more about the El Camino Corridor.

Susan Wright, Belmont resident, inquired about the safety element and its connection to flooding and sea level rise.

Chair Mates closed the Public Hearing.

Community Development Director deMelo stated that the public will continue to have an opportunity to weigh in on the Belmont Village Specific Plan and the Belmont Village Zoning.

Community Development Director deMelo stated both resolutions before the Planning Commission had legal modifications that addressed required CEQA findings.

City Attorney Rennie stated that the governor signed his package of fifteen housing bills; some will be beneficial to the City of Belmont, and some will require the City to make changes, such as changes to the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance. The governor passed the Inclusionary Housing Law that allows the City to require Inclusionary Rental Projects, so we will be looking at the Inclusionary Policy soon.

Commission discussion ensued regarding recreation and if the plan eliminated any recreation designated areas in zoning. Ms. Martin with Dyetta and Bhatia responded to the Commission that the plan does not eliminate any recreation designated areas. She stated that there is a difference between publicly provided recreation and recreation that is a private commercial enterprise. There is a crucial difference between what the city owns, operates and has control over and what it doesn't. There were no changes to public recreation or park spaces, and the City has been trying to identify places where it can fit more, which is a challenge to do in a built-out community such as Belmont. The city does not have a lot of control over privately operated commercial recreational facilities, and private facilities are not what the EIR section on Recreation addresses.

Commission discussion ensued regarding flood areas in the eastern areas of the city which includes the Belmont village.

Ms. Martin from Dyett and Bhatia stated there is a distinction to be made between flood zones that are mapped by FEMA in the typical 100, 200, 500-year flood zones which has to do with flooding arising by rain events or other instances; it is separate from flooding that will rise from sea level. The Climate Action Plan (CAP) is not written in such a way that it is a climate adaptation document; in other words, the Climate Action Plan doesn't talk about how we deal with the effects of climate change, but how we reduce Belmont's contribution to climate change. We have also suggested adding a new policy to the General Plan that speaks specifically to climate change adaption and sea level rise.

Discussion ensued regarding Section 10.6 in the Phase 1 Zoning. City Attorney Rennie stated that 10.6 in the Phase 1 Zoning is about process and we can address this process separately.

ACTION: On a Motion Made by Commissioner Simpson, Seconded by Commissioner Goldfarb, Regarding the Belmont 2035 General Plan Update (GP), Phase 1/Interim Zoning, Belmont Village Specific Plan (BVSP) & Belmont Village Zoning (BVZ), and Climate Action Plan (CAP), Recommending that the City Council Make All Findings Required Pursuant to CEQA Including a Statement of Overriding Considerations, Adoption of a Mitigated Monitoring and Reporting Program, and Certification of a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) in Accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Passed 5/2 (McCune, absent, Majeski, absent) Resolution 2017-39

ACTION: On a Motion Made by Commissioner Hendrix, Seconded by Commissioner Meola, Recommending that the City Council Adopt the Belmont 2035 General Plan (GP) Update, Phase 1/Interim Zoning Implementing the General Plan and Climate Action Plan. The Commission

recommended adoption of the changes to the General Plan that are included in the response to the comments Matrix along with Tonight's Material; Section 10.6 from the Phase 1 Zoning Interim Zoning was also recommended for removal.

Passed 5/2 (McCune, absent, Majeski, absent) Resolution 2017-40

Community Development Director deMelo stated that this is a recommendation to the City Council related to these three policy documents as well as the recommendation about Section 10.6. The recommendation is to have those documents and the responses to those comments and the subsequent changes to the language in the plans be incorporated; a recommendation on these three plans will be going to the City Council at their October 24, 2017 meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS / UPDATES

Community Development Director deMelo stated that all the construction projects around town continue to move forward. The City continues to receive heavy activity on single-family residential projects.

ADJOURNMENT: at this time being 10:00 P.M. to a regular meeting of the Planning Commission to be held on October 17, 2017.

Irma Hernandez
Temporary Administrative Assistant

Meeting televised and web streamed.